

REMARKS

The Examiner's Office Action mailed November 12, 2004 has been received and carefully reviewed. Claims 21 and 24 have been cancelled, and no new claims has been added. Thus, claims 17-20, 22, 23, 25-30 are pending in this application. For at least the following reasons, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance.

In the Action, Claim 17-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C.101 as claiming the same invention as that of claims 1-16 of prior U.S. Patent No. 6,624,010.

Applicant disagrees because of the following reasons.

Rejected independent claim 17 has been amended to includes a following limitation;

annealing the first silicide layer at a second temperature, which is effective in converting the first silicide layer into a second silicide layer by a rapid thermal annealing process wherein the second temperature is higher than the first temperature

None of claims of U.S. Patent No. 6,624,010 has such a limitation including that annealing the first silicide is performed by a rapid thermal annealing process.

Thus, since Applicant believes that Claim 17 does not claim the same invention of claims 1-16 of prior U.S. Patent No. 6,624,010, and is deemed to be clearly patentable, the rejection of independent claim 1 accordingly should be withdrawn. Since Claim 18-20, 22, 23, 25-30 depend from claim 17 directly or

indirectly, these dependent claims also are deemed to be clearly patentable, and the rejection of dependent claims accordingly should be withdrawn.

It is noted that this Amendment has been prepared using the requested new format. If there are any irregularities in this format, it would be greatly appreciated if Applicant's Counsel would be so advised.

In view of the foregoing, the application is deemed to be in condition for allowance and such is earnestly solicited. Should any fee be needed, please charge it to our Account No. 50-0945 and notify us accordingly.

Examination of the amended application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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